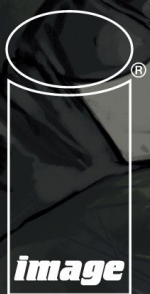


Saga

BRIAN K. VAUGHAN FIONA STAPLES

CHAPTER
TWELVE



HotComic.net

CHAPTER
TWELVE

Saga

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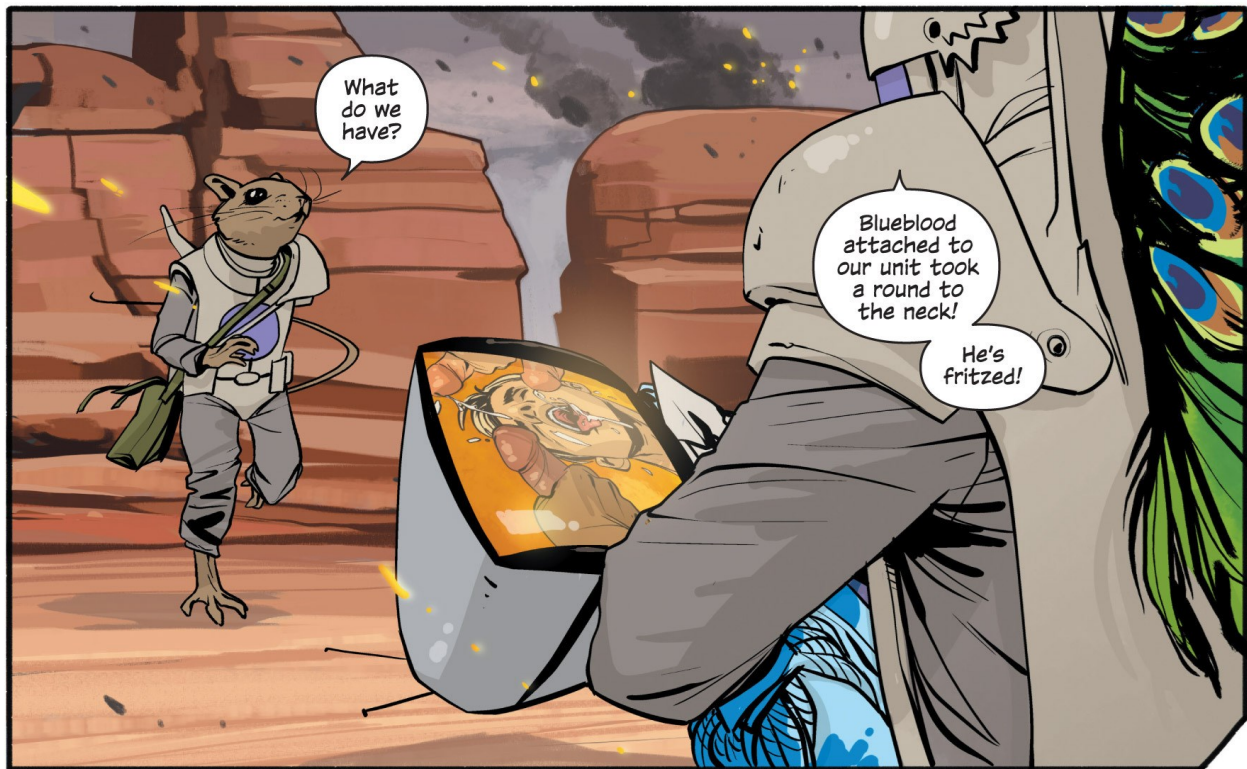
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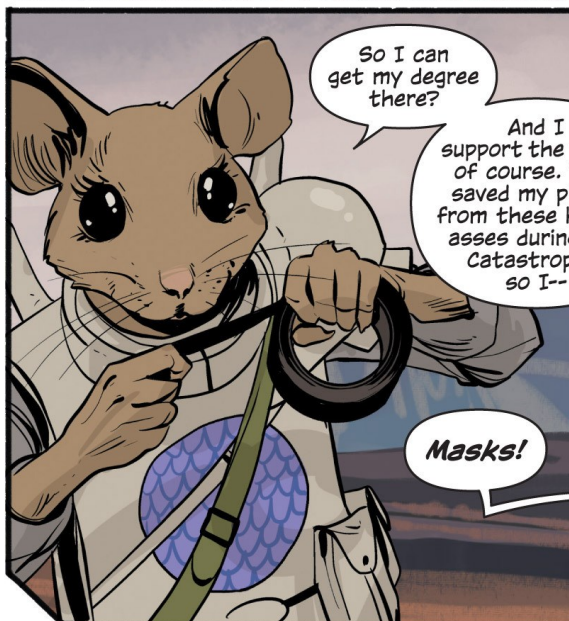
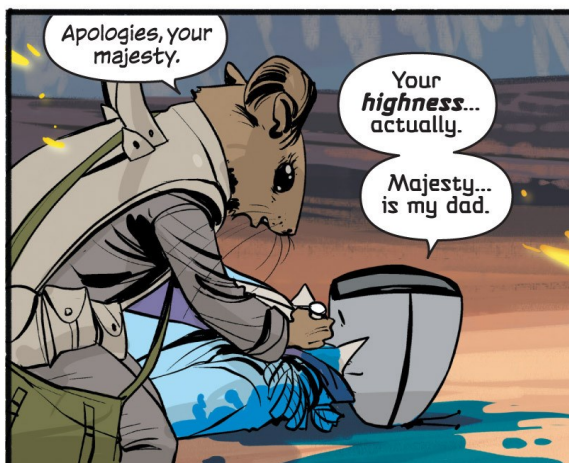
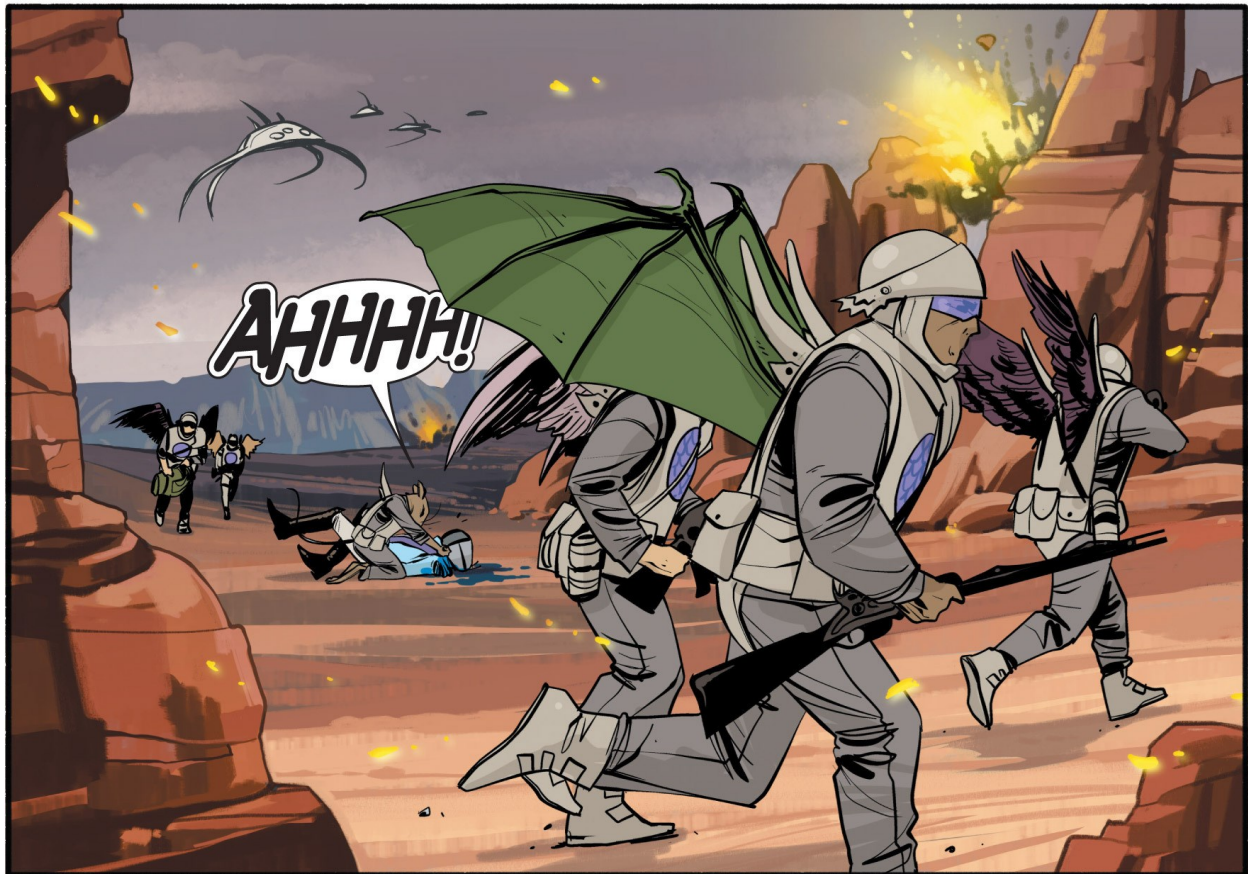
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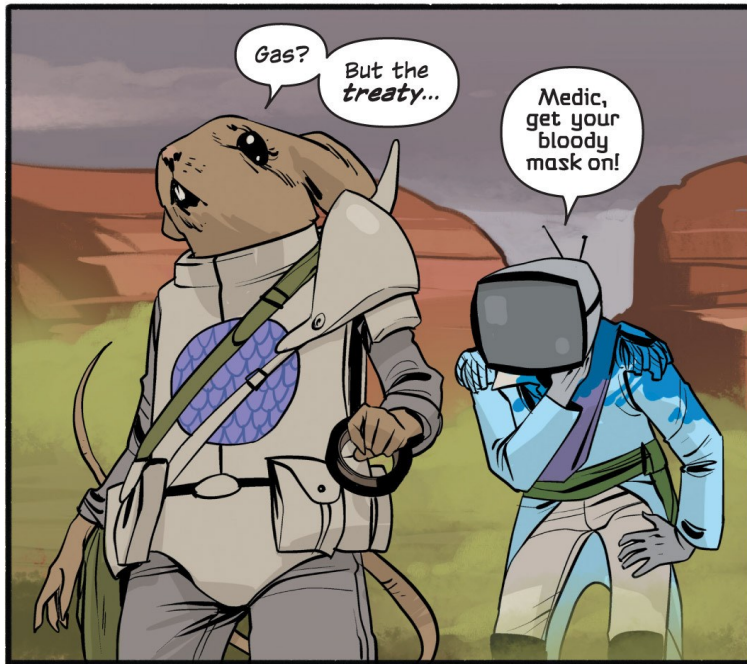
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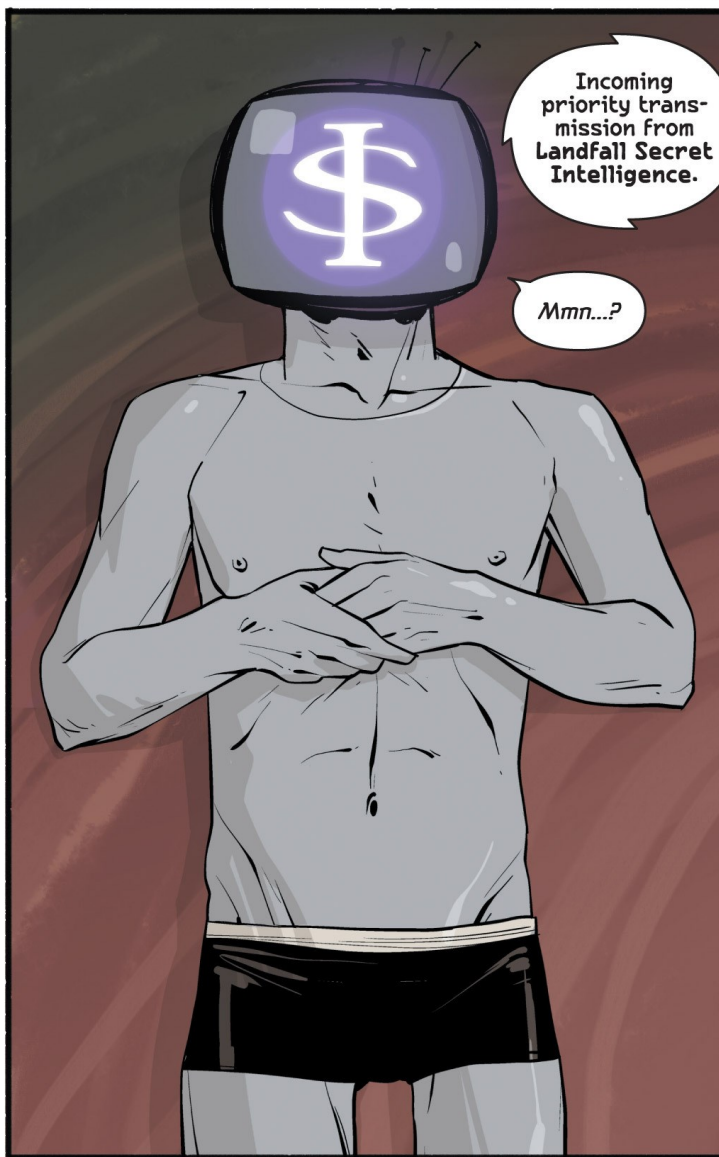
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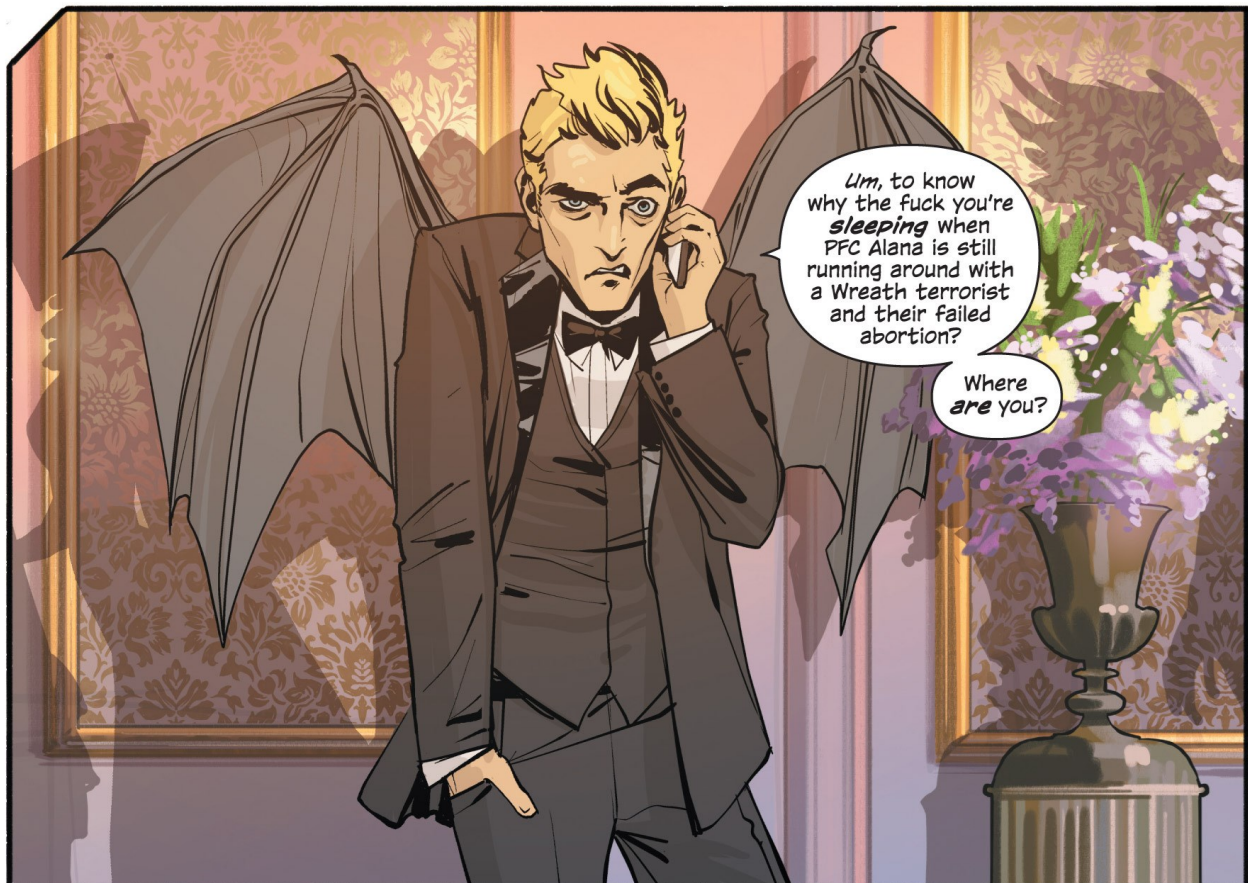






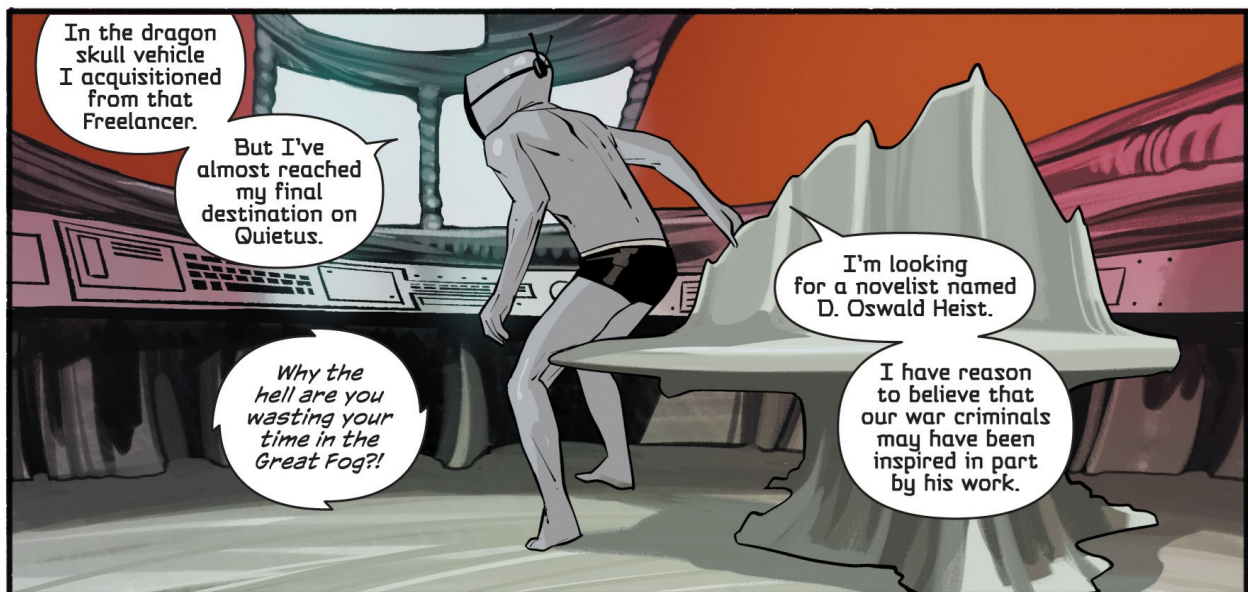






Um, to know why the fuck you're *sleeping* when PFC Alana is still running around with a Wreath terrorist and their failed abortion?

Where are you?



In the dragon skull vehicle I acquisitioned from that Freelancer.

But I've almost reached my final destination on Quietus.

Why the hell are you wasting your time in the Great Fog?!

I'm looking for a novelist named D. Oswald Heist.

I have reason to believe that our war criminals may have been inspired in part by his work.

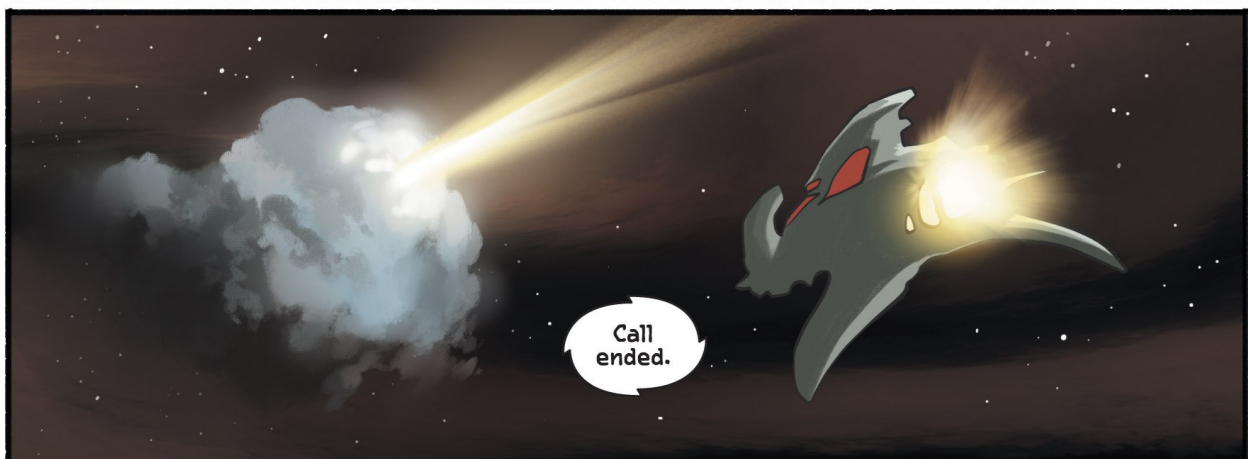


That's all you've got? A hunch about a writer?



Do you have any idea how stupid that will look on a report I have to type?

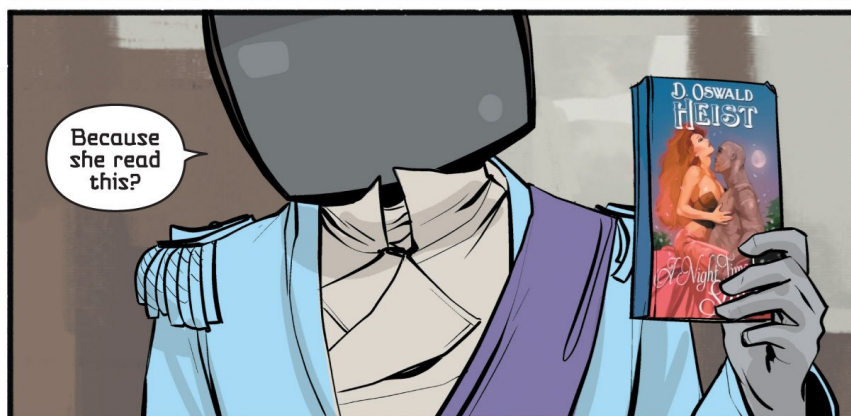
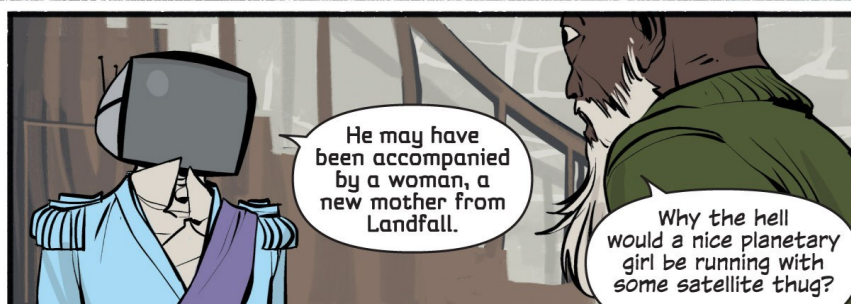
Just a moment... is that the **Royal Anthem** I hear in the background?

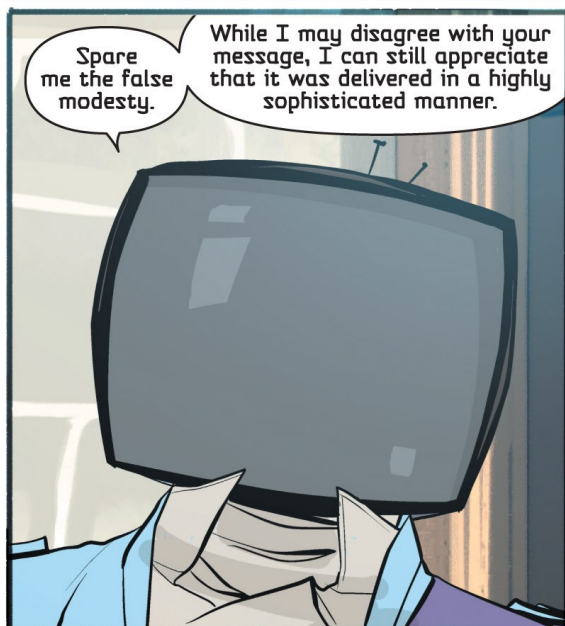
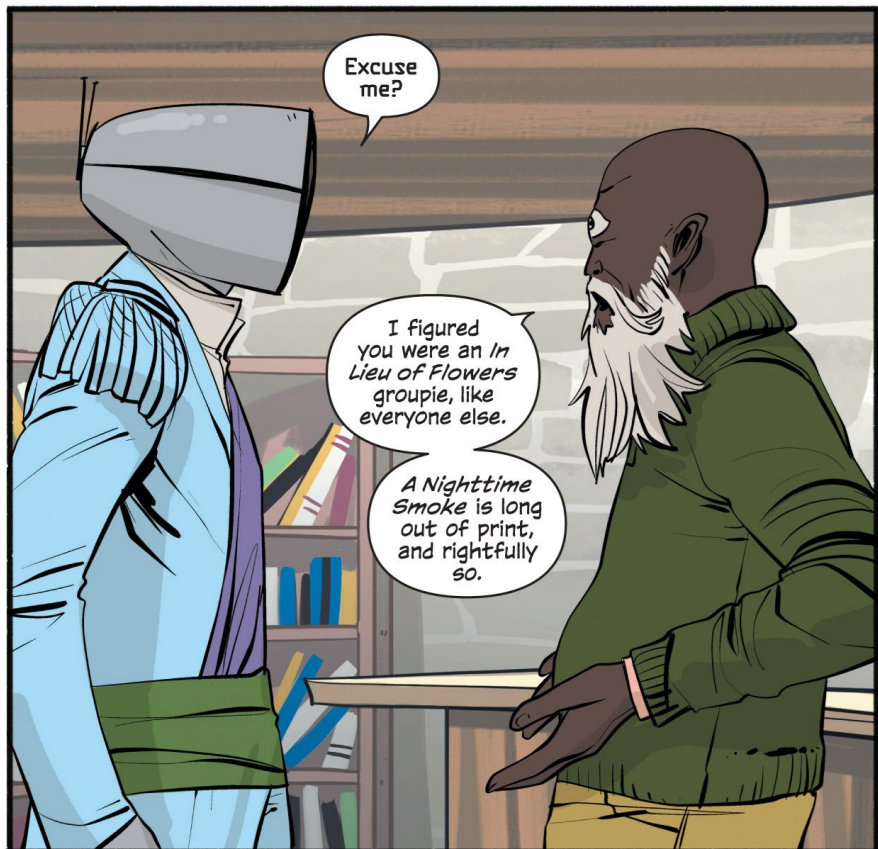


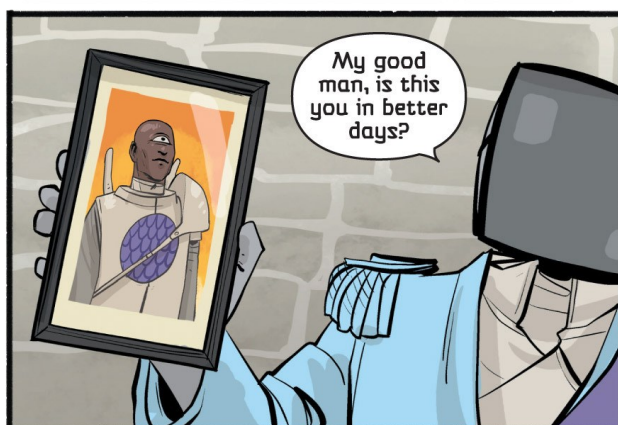
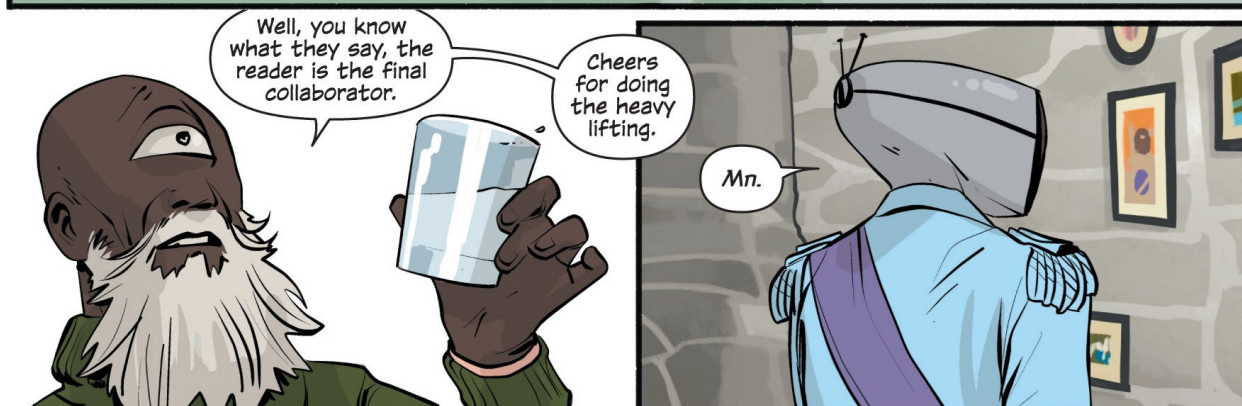


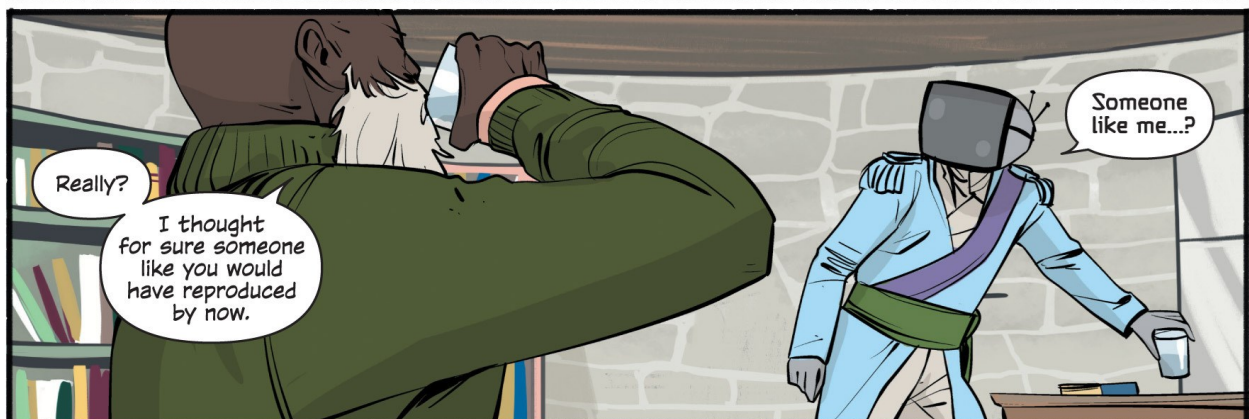
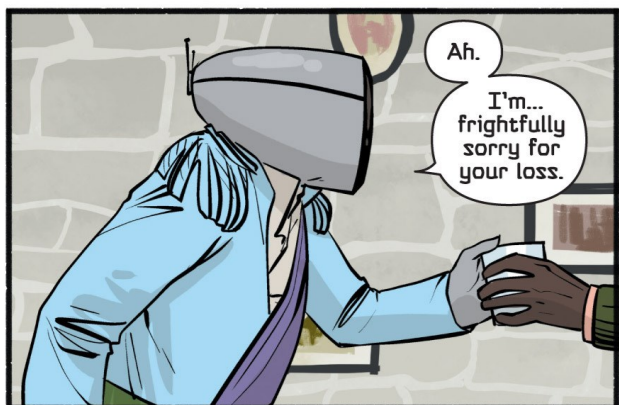
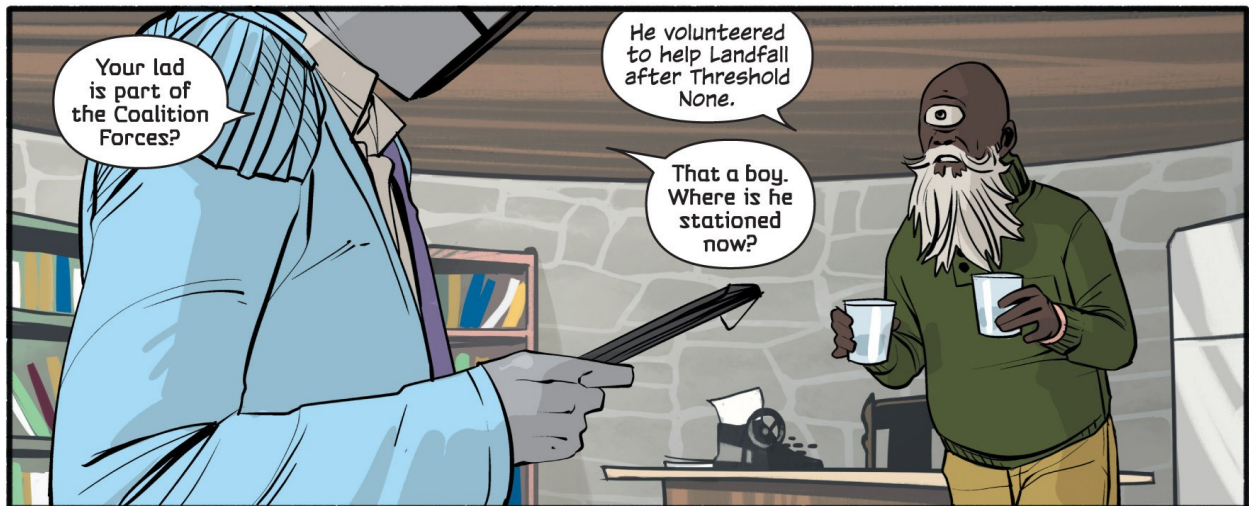


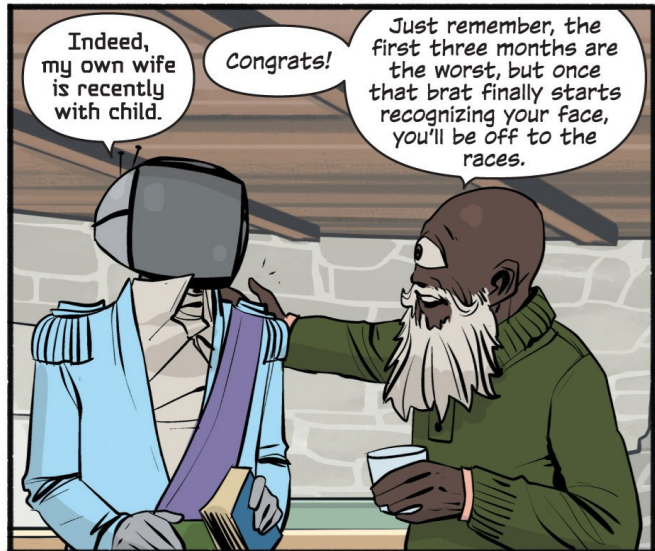


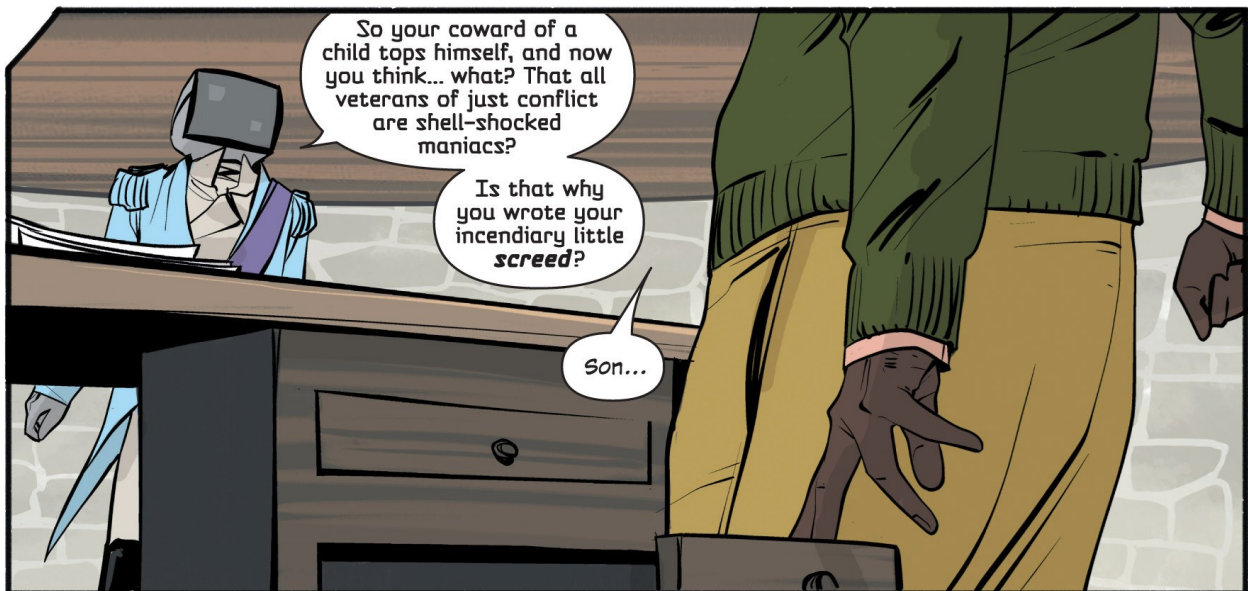
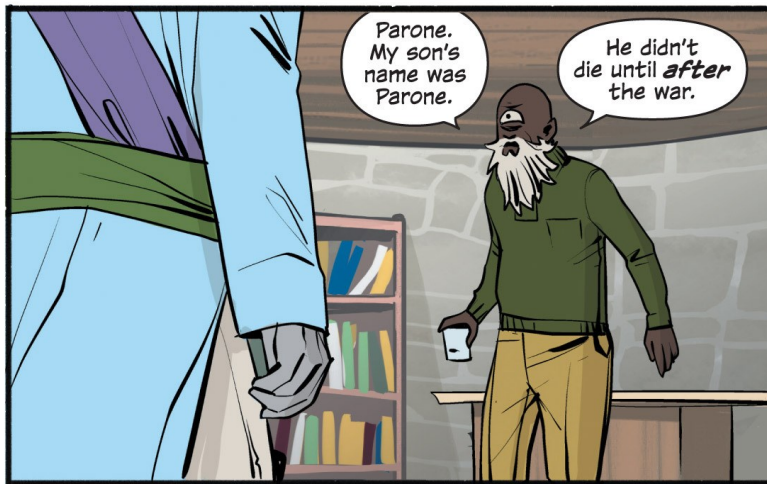


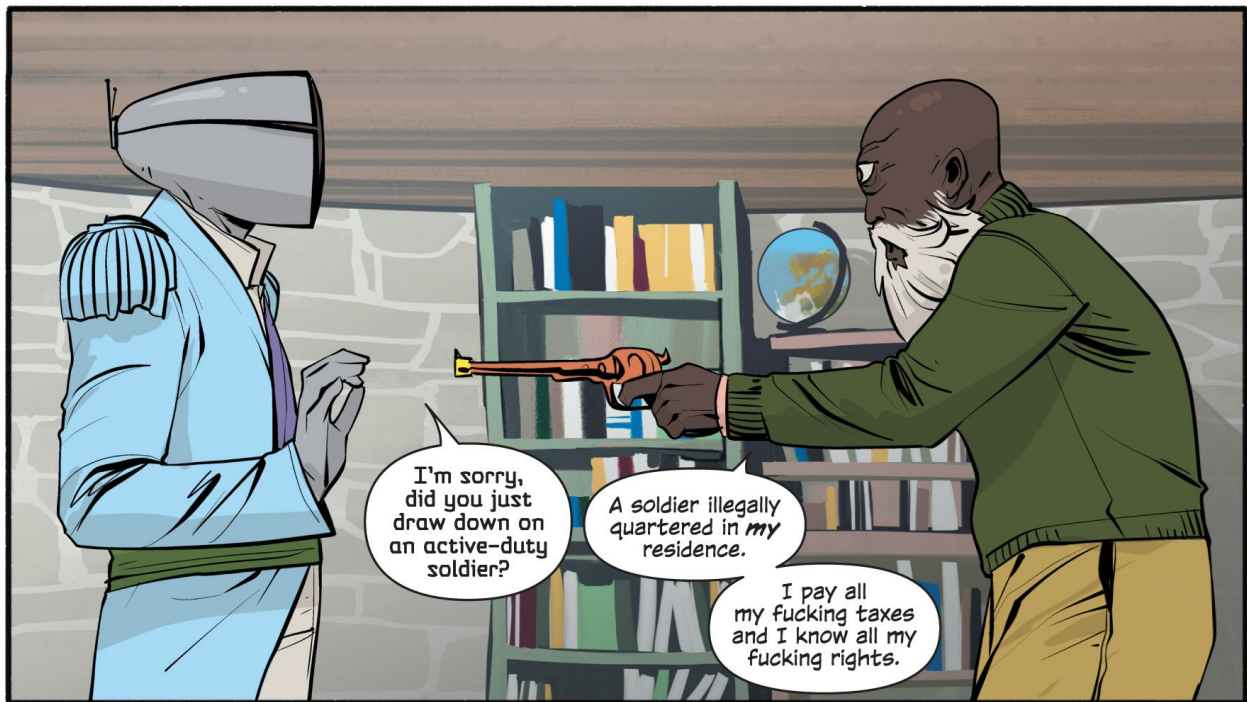














Of course, you now have every right to defend yourself.

Any rational person would...



...unless that person actually **believed** what was written in here.



You psychotic dullard!

The only reason I haven't shot you is because this is a prop! A terrible prop from a terrible adaptation of one of my best--

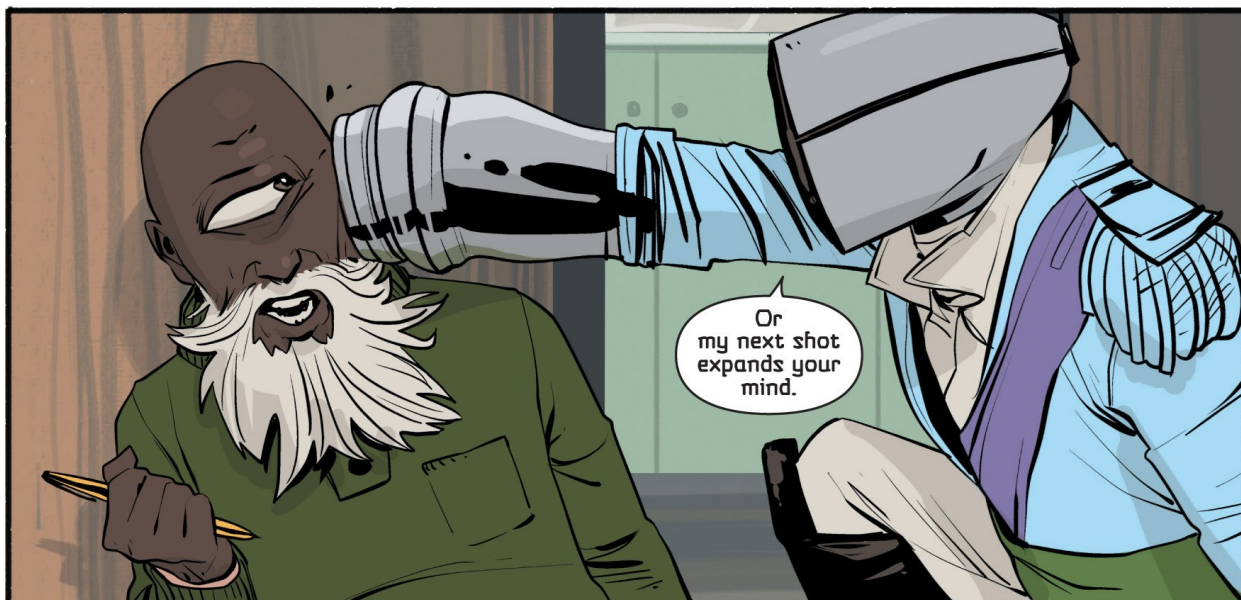
Shh, no more fiction.

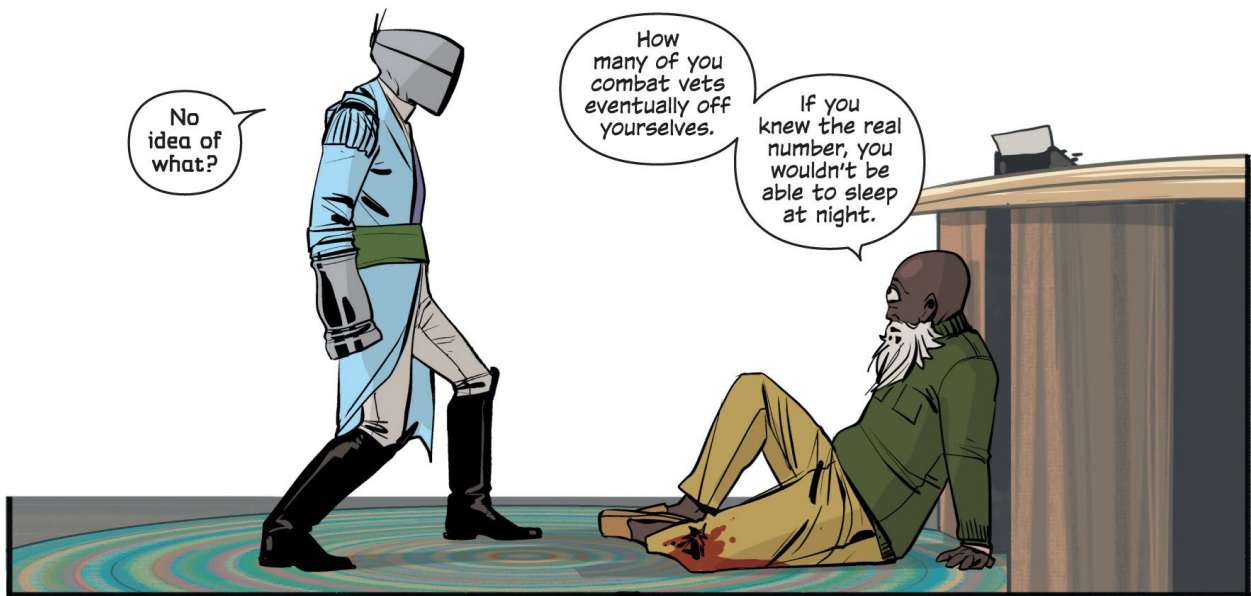


I want you to use your **real** weapon.



I want you to stab me in the neck with it.





No idea of what?

How many of you combat vets eventually off yourselves.

If you knew the real number, you wouldn't be able to sleep at night.



Though I bet it's been a long time since you slept through the night anyway.

Do you piss yourself sometimes? When you dream about it?



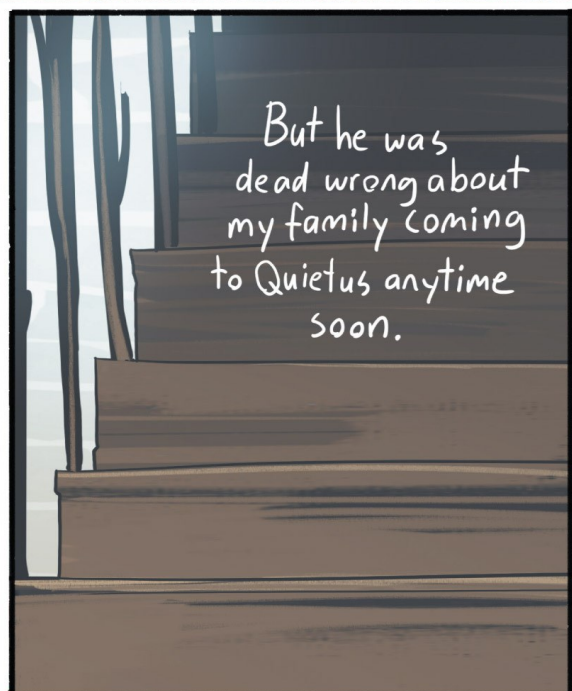
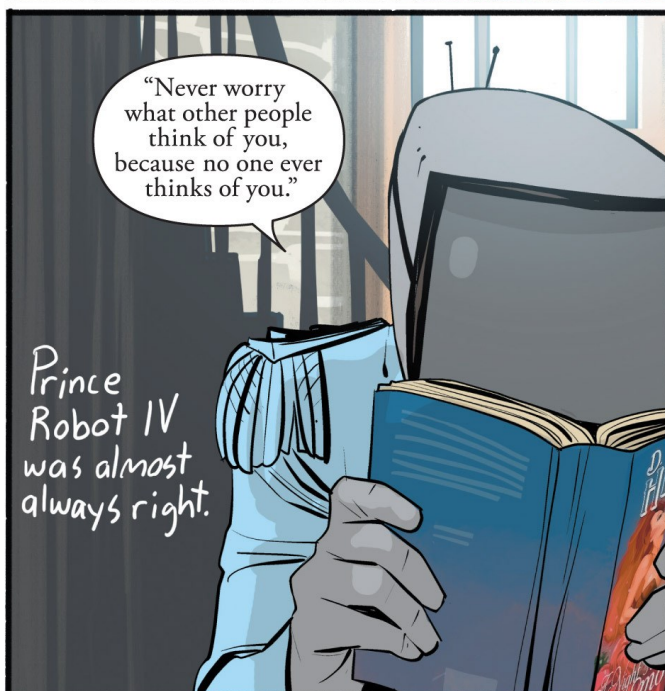
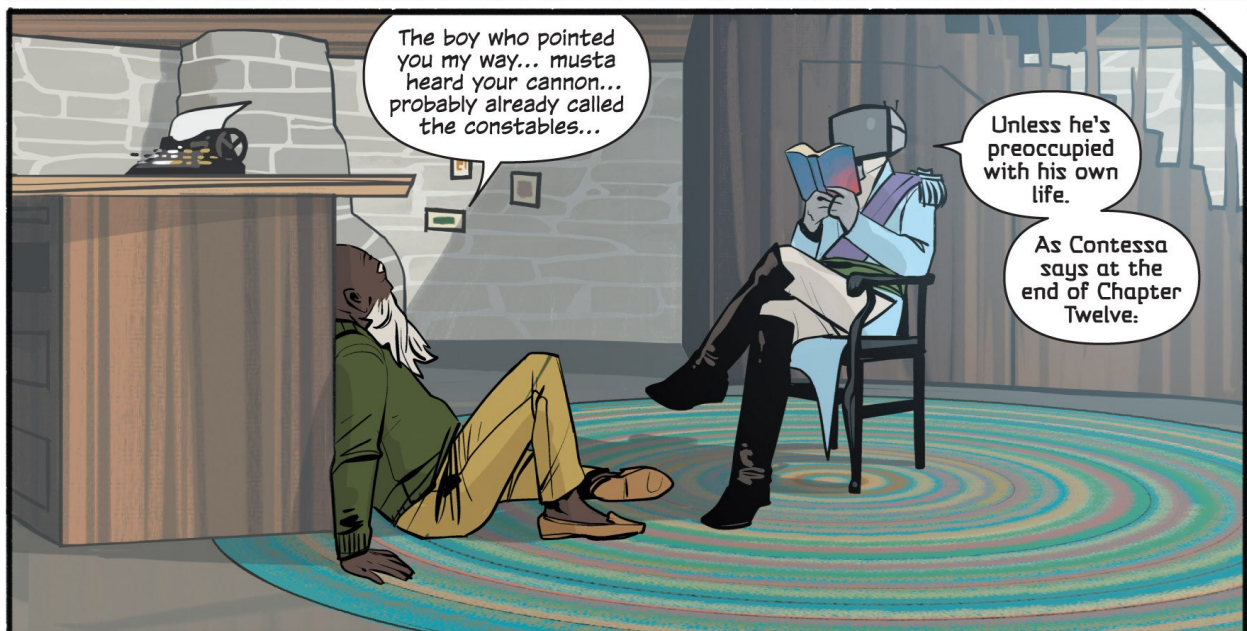
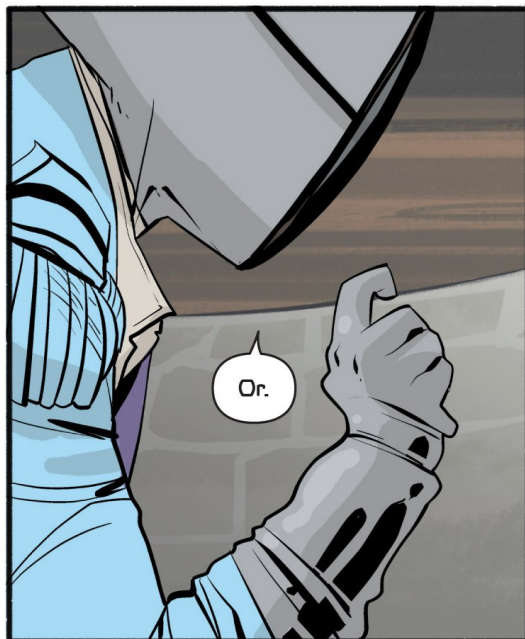
I bet your little Parone did.



Fucking finish me off already, tough guy.



It'll only boost my sales.



We'd already been there a week.



TO BE CONTINUED

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Wait, what the...? But when did they...? Stay tuned, *Saga*-teers, all will be revealed, in just a few short months.

Yes, it's time for another one of our dreaded brief hiatuses, but as always, just because our book's publishing schedule is taking a short break doesn't mean that the creative team is. We're already hard at work on Chapter Thirteen, and these upcoming skip months will allow Fiona and me to bank enough pages to put out another six issues in a timely fashion upon our reemergence.

I realize that this is the Worst News Imaginable, which is why we've assembled this **SAGA HIATUS SURVIVAL GUIDE**, with some recommendations on how to best fritter away your existences during our absence:

1. MORE SAGA I love how quickly Image allows us to publish collections, and *SAGA: VOLUME TWO* should be available everywhere very shortly. If you've been supporting us by buying individual copies of our series, great news: now you can resell them for obscene amounts online, and use a fraction of your plunder on one of our beautifully bound but affordably priced trade paperbacks, reprinting everything from the last six issues except my desperate back-of-the-book hucksterism.

2. MORE SAGA STUFF By popular demand, it's our first stab at MERCH. Showcase your sound judgment with this striking Lying Cat shirt from artist/co-creator Fiona Staples and letterer/designer Fonografiks, coming soon to your friendly neighborhood comics retailer:



3. MORE FIONA STAPLES I have to stop plugging long enough to thank Fiona, not just for another 132 pages of gorgeous artwork (and another six insta-classic covers), but also for helping to inspire some of the best story moments of our second arc. She never takes credit for the story side of this series (and crummy lines of dialogue are always my fault), but in our sporadic brief discussions at cons, Fiona always tosses out fantastic ideas that I happily steal. She's the fucking best.

It sounds like more of Fiona's sold-out prints are already on the way to www.essentialsequential.com, where you'll also be able to find copies of her spectacular art book, *FIONA STAPLES: DIGEST*. And if you're the kind of person who owns a computer, be sure to follow [@FionaStaples](https://twitter.com/FionaStaples) for more updates.

4. MORE BRIAN KELLER VAUGHAN Holy crap, I'm writing a new comic series! It's called *THE PRIVATE EYE*, co-created with artist Marcos Martin, and digital copies of the first issue are available for immediate download exclusively at www.PanelSyndicate.com. It's a story about privacy set in America's future, when everyone will have a secret identity. Marcos and I are really, really proud of this sci-fi mystery, so we hope you'll check it out. No plans for it to ever be in print, though I remain dedicated to paper comics forever, especially with our friends at Image.

5. MORE BOOKS FROM IMAGE Speaking of which, man does Image have some cool books coming out this summer. Joe Casey and Piotr Kowalski are easily out-filthing us with their new book *Sex*, my old friends Steve Niles and Tony Harris bring the horror with *Chin Music*, Millar and Quitely finally deliver their superhero epic *Jupiter's Children*, we get more Hickman and Dragotta brilliance with *East Of West*, and Greg Rucka/Michael Lark's *Lazarus* looks fucking amazing. Five fantastic books, and the only thing they have in common is being 100% owned and controlled by the writers and artists who created them. Nice one, Stephenson.

6. MORE BOOKS NOT FROM IMAGE Have you guys read this graphic novel *The Nao Of Brown* by Glyn Dillon? Steve Seagle recommended it to me, and it's an absolute masterpiece. I don't even want to describe it, just please go read it and love it, all right? Oh, and *Fury MAX* from Garth Ennis and Goran Parlov continues to be the best comic Marvel has published in about fifty years. Also loving Stokoe's *Godzilla Half Century War* from IDW!

7. MORE BOOKS THAT ARE NOW TV SHOWS Feels like I was raised by mom and three men: Steven Spielberg, Stephen King and my actual father, who introduced me to their work. So it's a ridiculous honor to be a small part of helping two of those guys adapt *UNDER THE DOME* for television. The first episode is scheduled to debut June 24 on CBS, and I love the cast, crew and especially all of the writers, so I hope you'll give our show a try. And if you haven't already, please pick up Mr. King's novel, which features one of the best sentences I've ever read (on page 1062 of the hardcover).

That should be more than enough to keep you goons occupied for a spell, yeah?

All right, it's almost time to inspect your finery for our first ever **SAGA COSTUME CONTEST**, but before we do, let's squeeze in a few of your letters...

Hi, Brian,

Greetings from Ireland.

I thought I'd write to you after picking up Saga #7 and #8 in SubCity Comics here in Dublin. I've been a sci-fan for years now but not a big reader of comics, there was some 2000AD in my youth but it's mainly been books. Actual paper books, no Kindle for me.

However when we had our little boy 4 years ago, I found it hard to read a novel while trying to burp him at the same time, that's when I heard about Y: The Last Man. (Don't ask where I heard, those first few months are a bit of a blur). I picked up Volume 1 and was hooked, every month on payday I'd buy another. When I heard you were working on a sci-fi/space opera project I couldn't wait.

Saga Volume One did not disappoint, great story and brilliant art from Fiona, and once I finished it my wife picked it up out of curiosity and LOVED it. So now I have that really great feeling of having a new installment to look forward to every month. In a world of instant gratification it's nice to have to WAIT for something every once in a while, and making the trek into the city centre to SubCity is one of those little pleasures in life that I now look forward to with relish.

Hopefully that sense of patience and anticipation is something I can pass onto my son when he's old enough. I'd like to think in a few years that a weekly trip into a comic store with his old man followed by a burger and a coke would be a fine way to spend the day.

Thanks for your great work.

Ruairi Carroll

Dublin, Ireland

You hear that, impatient mob? Ruairi here understands the importance of a little anticipation in life...

Dear Brian and Fiona,

In Chapter Seven you asked if there's "any other families out there sharing our vulgar book with your parents and/or offspring?" Well, I'm happy to report that my teen daughter and I are avid fans and we sneak copies into church in a brown paper bag to share with our friend who sings in the choir. How did we arrive at such subterfuge? It's a twisty tale of burgeoning obsession with comics in our household...

My two kids are artsy and have been delving into the world of comics—first via graphic novels and manga at their local library and then we slowly started to discover the American comics market at our library and our local comic book store Zombie Planet.

Two years ago we made our way to New York Comic Con and got swept up in the magic, and teen daughter Ceili was invited to take part in the all-woman comic book anthology Womanthology. We started following our favorite creators from the book. And comics loving relatives came out of the woodwork and recommended more 'literary' collections and Brian's name kept popping up.

Then we attended Boston Comic Con and Ming Doyle sang the praises of Runaways—tween son Zeph and I hunted down the paperbacks at the con and raced through them. Loved every minute of it, although we still miss Gert.

We heard through twitter that a favorite Womanthology artist Fiona Staples was pairing up with you. Then worlds collided and I saw the first cover via some parenting sites and I was psyched. I'm a former La Leche League Leader and was happy to see such a positive AND kick-ass image of a breastfeeding mom.

In between that time we've been adding more titles to our pull list as the three of us (sorry, the husband's not into comics... yet) find more artists and writers we love. So Chapter One comes home with me but I'm busy as my daughter grabs it and sneaks off into her room. A few squeals and "OMGs" later and she's shoving it in my face much like Alana in Chapter Eight exclaiming I have to read it NOW. And it's sooo good. But of course I'm a mom so I need to check in "um, about that robot sex...questions?" Answering eye-roll and we're good. I figure anything's a 'teachable moment' and you've provided a few along the way. But we're all good. Really what she wants to talk about is characters, art, world-building and on and on. Tween son's a bit freaked out by what he's overheard, so he said he'll wait til he's 'age appropriate' and stick with his comics for now.

Fast forward and we're heading to this year's New York Comic Con and have highlighted every event you and/or Fiona are attending. We made it to every panel EXCEPT the main Saga one. But we had a good excuse, since teen daughter Ceili was on the Womanthology panel opposite you guys. Also at the same time Nathan Fillion was surprising folks on the other side of the wall. NYCC scheduling can be SO CRUEL.

Meanwhile my friend from church Rebecca's along with us and she's a writer and NYCC panelist for Geekmom and reviews manga, graphic novels etc. but HAS NOT READ SAGA. Knowing this I brought all of them along to NYCC and she raced through and is hooked. So as new issues come out I sneak 'em into church in our classy brown paper bag and she swaps other sexytimes graphic novels like Sailor Moon. We moms appreciate good art and storytelling.

So thank you to both of you for a gripping story with amazing characters and deep issues...and some 'teachable moments'... in a comic we fight over to read first and then excitedly talk about with each other and friends for a long time after reading.

Karen E. Conway

Selkirk, NY

I know what you're all thinking: what could be better than that letter from (no offense, mom) the Planet's Greatest Mother? I'm glad you asked.

Dear Saga Team,

I cannot properly express my gratitude for the spectacular story that you have created. My mom and I were both devoted fans from Chapter One, and each time we pick up the newest issue from our local comic book store, we quarrel about who gets to read it first. Admittedly, I definitely rank in as one of Saga's youngest readers, as I started reading Saga before I even started high school. This means I occasionally have to wonder what my parents are letting me poison my brain with, but most of the time Saga is so wonderful, I don't really care.

As a fledgling artist and potential storyteller, Saga truly stands out as something I will remember. I love all the characters, and eagerly anticipate learning what will happen

next. With all of the thoughtful appraisals out there, I could probably get really analytical about what I think makes Saga so amazing. However, I am not experienced enough to do that quite well so I will just say this: The art is gorgeous. The story is magnificent. Saga is superb.

Thank you for creating something truly remarkable.

Sincerely,
Ceili F. Conway
Selkirk, NY



Ceili, I love your artwork! You could have an amazing career in this crazy field, so please keep at it. Thanks for being wise and talented beyond your years, and for being mature enough to handle all of the deviant shit my collaborator is constantly sneaking into our story.

But enough stalling! There were approximately one billion entries in our first Costume Contest and I love every single outfit with a disturbing intensity. I wish we had room to show all of them to you, but for now, here are our judge/my loyal dachshund Hamburger K. Vaughan's TOP TEN FAVORITES (each of whom will be receiving some very special Saga swag), culminating in our one ULTIMATE MEGA WINNER.



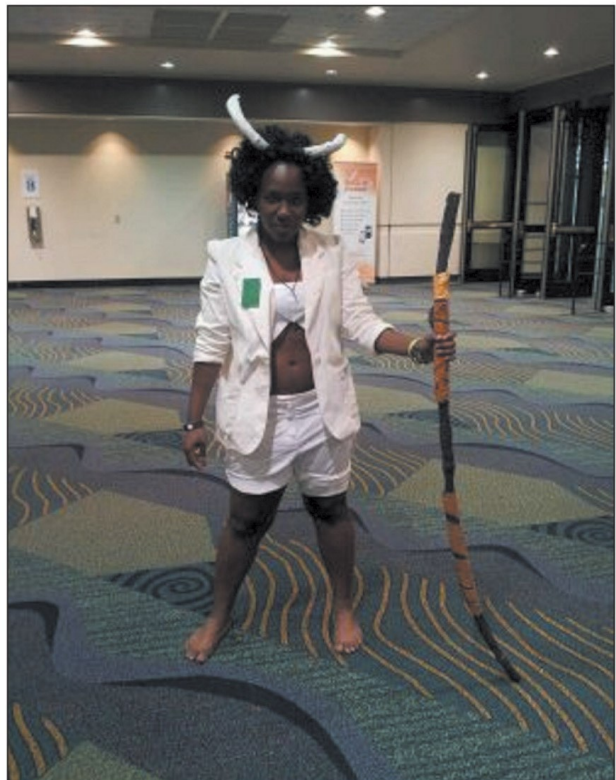
TENTH PLACE

THE PRINCESS (with awesome set dressing)
by Maribeth Martell,
Fairfield, IA



NINTH PLACE

THE WILL
by Hunter Marks
(who shaved his head for the part; commitment!)
Florence, AL



EIGHTH PLACE

GWENDOLYN!!!
by Jennifer Pugh,
Orlando, FL



SEVENTH PLACE

PRINCE ROBOT IV (from scratch)

by Jose Garcia

Jackson Heights, NY



SIXTH PLACE

VEZ (talk about a deep cut!)

by Nancy Amaro

Mercedes, TX



FIFTH PLACE

HAZEL

by Hazel Z. (named after the rabbit from Watership Down,

but dressed by her badass mom Holly as *our* Hazel!)
Mercedes, TX



FOURTH PLACE

ALANA & MARKO

by Taylor Frost and Jamie O'Neil

(taken at Megacon in Orlando, with mega-intensity)



THIRD PLACE

IZABEL

by Joan Chao

(who looked equally astounding sans Photoshop, bravo!)

Houston, TX



SECOND PLACE

SEXTILLION HOSTESS

by Eric C. Jones, Winchester, VA

Brian and Fiona,

When I saw you were having a costume contest, I knew I could finally put my lack of shame to good use. I made the Sextillion lady head at work (I won't tell if you won't), bought some fishnets from Wal-Mart, sexy heels from Salvation Army, and headed off to the happiest place on Earth, Dinosaur Land in Stephens City, Virginia. The pictures were taken by my lovely girlfriend Jeanette. I included a few, I figured you could pick the one(s) you like and burn the rest. Don't think that will erase the image of my sexy gams from your memory though, that shit's going to stick around for a loooooong time.

Sincerely,

Eric

P.S. I also included a behind-the-scenes pic, so you know who to slap at a convention.

No slapping necessary, Eric. You're an American hero, one who will haunt all of our dreams for years to come. Top shelf work by you and your girlfriend, but according to our highly qualified canine judge, not quite enough to dethrone our final entrant...

My Dearest Brian and Fiona,

Let me just start off by thanking you guys for forging this team and starting my new favorite comic series. It is absolutely brilliant. Brian, I have admired your work for some time now and was very happy to hear that you were starting a new story. Fiona however, I had not had the pleasure to witness your work before Saga, and boy am I glad that I did. BEAUTIFUL. Just astounding. You guys are so talented, so thank you again.

Okay, enough gushing, on to the important part. COSTUMES!

I absolutely love making costumes and dressing up. In fact, costume design is an ambition of mine, so you can imagine my excitement when you announced this contest. However, I have been a little strapped for cash lately (the only reason I am emailing this instead of printing everything out and mailing :/) and had to throw this together on a bit of a shoestring budget. I am pretty happy with the results though! I decided to take on the challenge of becoming The Stalk. She is such a beautiful, glorious badass. I made everything from scratch and had so much fun doing it. I included some extra photos along with the final entry so you could witness the whole endeavor (as well as proof that Photoshop was only used for a little color correction, that costume's all me!) And what an endeavor it was! I live in New York, and I am not sure if you noticed... but it is winter. See that snow on the ground in the photo? That's real snow. And those boobs in the photo? Those are my boobs. It was freezing! I risked life and limb for you guys. But you know what? You are worth it. I don't regret a thing. Thankfully I had a couple of friends help me with the photo taking process so it didn't last too long. (Oh, and also a little bit of whiskey for added warmth... but don't tell anyone.) I am happy to present this entry to you, and I hope to see some of the other entries as well, should you be putting them up anywhere! I love a good competition.

I hope you enjoy my photos as much as I enjoyed making them!

With Love and Adoration,

Lyssa K.

Wow. Get ready to see some exceptional work on the next page. No question Lyssa earned her prize package: an original Fiona Staples sketch of Lyssa as The Stalk, our rarest retailer variant issue (which recently sold for a criminal \$1,400 on eBay), and the even rarer original hard copy of my first script, as well as that whopping cash-money check (so you better at least take your lovely assistants out for some Crispy Soul Soy Chicken at Vegetarian Paradise 2 on West 4th).

I can't even describe what a tremendous honor it is to see artists safely smuggle our characters into the real world like this, so thanks to everyone who contributed.

In the first *To Be Continued*, I said that new comics don't have fans, they have families, but I never could have imagined how huge (and smartly dressed) our family would be by the end of this whirlwind first year. There are some new characters in Chapter Thirteen we're particularly excited for you guys to meet, and we'll also be doing another way-too-personal Reader Survey in the next letter column, so I hope you'll all rejoin our monthly caravan for the beginning of Saga's second year.

Get ready for the terrible twos...

Back to work,

BKV



FIRST PLACE

THE STALK
by lyssa K.





**FRANK
QUITELY**

**JUPITER'S
LEGACY**



APRIL

WHO'S NEXT

imagecomics.com

RATED **M** / MATURE

HotComic.net

MINUTEMEN

SYL3NT BOB

